



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**AFGHANISTAN**

## SUCCESS STORY

# Youth Leadership Training in Hirat

**Training aims to assist youth in leadership, and job skills, inducing an investment in their communities**



Photo: USAID/LGCD

*Shindand District Governor, Lal Mohammad Omarzai hands out certificate during the closing ceremony in October 2010.*

**Training participants enhanced their ability to analyze problems, manage problems, write proposals in order to receive funds, and have better communication with the government.**

Although 68 percent of Afghanistan's population is under the age of 25, the youth in areas such as Shindand District of Hirat Province face a particularly volatile environment because local tribes act hostile toward central government authorities. This has created a situation where youth face a severe lack of employment opportunities and do not feel able to engage the government to help address issues important to them.

In meetings with USAID project staff, district and village leaders consistently encouraged them to develop youth focused projects. Leaders asserted that young people had very little opportunity to interact with youth from other communities and lacked exposure to peaceful means of airing their grievances.

In response to this feedback, USAID initiated a five-day training course for 61 male and female trainees from various communities across the district identified by the district department of Youth and Culture and the Women Activities and Social Services Association. Participants learned basic leadership skills including management techniques, teamwork, time management, transparency, accountability, honesty, and communication.

After attending the training, Esmatullah, one of the participants from the village of Wazirabad, created a football club and has recruited and organized 23 young men to form a team, which they have named Sohl (peace). Esmatullah proudly said, "the leadership training taught me that good behavior from a leader inspires the team to follow and work hard for the team."

This sort of youth involvement and engagement is vital for the future development of local communities as it creates trust between the people and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) and develops a stake in the development of their communities.

USAID's Local Governance and Community Development project works throughout Afghanistan's most volatile provinces to improve stability through strengthened governance, linking local populations with sub-national government structures to provide better service delivery in response to constituents' needs.